



**TOWN OF  
BROOKLINE, NEW HAMPSHIRE**

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**CEMETERY TRUSTEES**

**Minutes**

**Tuesday, March 24, 2020**

**This meeting was conducted electronically due to the social distancing required during the Covid-19 pandemic, per Governor Sununu's Emergency Order #12 pursuant to Executive Order 2020-04, adopting the waiver of a physically present quorum allowed under RSA 91-A:12, III(b) providing public access is preserved.**

**Participants:**

Brian Rater, Chair – by phone  
Ann Somers, Secretary – by phone  
Ann Webb, Member – by phone  
Tad Putney, Town Administrator – physically present  
Jerry Farwell, Sexton – physically present  
Mike Wenrich, DPW Director – by phone

The meeting was opened at 6:35. There was no public input.

**Election of Officers**

Motions were made and unanimously approved, with the following results: Chair: Brian; Secretary: Ann Somers; Vice Chair (a recently-discovered required position): Ann Webb.

**Minutes**

The December 18, 2019 minutes were approved as written.

**Vacancy of Sexton Position**

Jerry recently announced that he would decline the position of sexton, which traditionally in Brookline has been voted on at Annual Town Meeting, and has been held by succeeding members of Jerry's family for many years. He will continue to perform necessary duties and work with Mike while we seek a replacement, and will aid in transition. The Selectboard voted on March 9th "to recommend the cemetery trustees appoint the next cemetery

sexton.” This approach follows RSA 289:7-II: *Cemetery trustees may appoint a cemetery custodian or sexton who shall not be a trustee and who shall be responsible to the cemetery trustees for supervising work done in the cemeteries.*

There was discussion covering the various tasks that fall under the purview of a sexton, and how they will be divided up for Brookline. Cemetery management including groundskeeping and burials will fall under the DPW (Mike Wenrich), records will be overseen by the Town Clerk (Patti Howard-Barnett), and receipts for purchase as well as trust funds accounts will be handled by the bookkeeper (Sharon Sturtevant).

Following conversation with Jerry, Tad will provide a draft job posting as a working basis for the Trustees to consider. Ann S. has gathered supportive materials from other towns, and will forward. We will meet next week to finalize the posting, and will provide it for the Selectboard meeting of April 6<sup>th</sup>.

### **Covid-19 and the cemeteries**

There was discussion about whether to impose Covid-19 restrictions around burials. We determined not to, as there is no direct interaction at burial with townspeople.

At this point Tad and Jerry stepped out to discuss a job description for the position of sexton.

### **Tree trimming at Lakeside Cemetery**

Brian said that he and his husband Brendan Denehy have some trees on their property that border and overhang Lakeside Cemetery and need major trimming, and they will hire professionals to do the work in order to protect the cemetery. He wanted to alert the Trustees and coordinate with the sexton so that all are satisfied that the cemetery is being protected.

At this point Tad returned to the meeting and was apprised of the tree trimming.

### **Review of items carried over from December’s meeting**

#### **1. Update bylaws to reflect new check-signing policy**

**Tad** will draft a proposed policy. In the interim a practice has been put in place for Trustee approval.

#### **2. Record-keeping upgrade from Lotus software into a Word table**

**Patti**, as Town Clerk, is responsible for records. With Covid-19’s effects reducing the office workload, she may be able to delegate and oversee the remaining clerical work needed to incorporate the grave records into the table, possibly beginning next week. She will contact **Ann S.** and we will work with **Kim**.

#### **3. Old well pump at Pine Grove**

**Mike** will see that the well is filled for safety.

#### **4. Trees on South Main Street where the sidewalk is going in**

The engineering design is approaching final and there will be a walkthrough with the engineers before that time. **Tad** would like direction within the next month about what trees ought to be chosen in exchange for the pines that will be taken down, and roughly where they will go. The work will go out to bid, but it’s uncertain at this point whether the sidewalk will be completed this year or next. **Ann S.** will do appropriate research on trees and report back.

**5. Stone fence at North Cemetery**

We need a realistic estimate for budgeting purposes of the cost for the simple stone fence we would like to have there to replace the plastic picket one along the road. At this meeting we all, including **Jerry**, agreed that we want to use stones which within 10 years will look like they belong with the old ones. **Brian** will follow up with **Jerry** on getting an estimate.

**6. Gridlines for southwest section of Pine Grove**

The gridding (surveying) of the balance of Pine Grove Cemetery is critical. **Brian** will speak with **Jerry** and coordinate with **Tad**. We have a budget for the task of \$500.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:44 p.m.

Next meeting TBD, at 6:30 p.m.

Minutes submitted by Ann Somers